

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated August 25, 2005 (U.S. Patent Office Paper No. 20050822). In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

As outlined above, claims 1, 5, 7 – 10, 13, 14 and 16 – 23 are currently pending in this application, wherein claims 2 and 6 are being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, while claims 1, 5, 7, 13, 19 and 20 are being amended to correct formal errors and to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject invention. All amendments to the claims are fully supported in the application. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Formal Objections or Rejections

The Examiner objected to claim 13 for being of improper dependent form and for failing to further limit claim 5 from which it depends. As outlined above, claim 13 is being amended in accordance with the Examiner's requirements.

Prior Art Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5-8, 11, 13, 14, 16 and 18-20 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mullee (US Patent No. 6,206,564) in view of Vaarstra (US Patent No. 6,242,165). Further, he rejected claims 1, 3, 5-10, 16 and 18-20 as being unpatentable over Mullee (WO 01/33613) in view of Vaarstra '165.

Even more, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 5, 10, 14, 16 and 18-20 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Xu et al. (US Application No. 2003/0125225), and claims 2, 4 and 6-9 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Xu '225.

Further, the Examiner rejected claims 21 and 22 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mullee '564 or Mullee WO '613 in view of Vaarstra '165, or Xu '225 and further in view of McCullough et al. (US Patent No. 5,976,264).

As indicated in the Final Office Action, the Examiner considered claim 23 allowable over the prior art of record in view of the recitation of a quaternary ammonium hydroxide as an element of the claim.

As outlined above in the amendments to the claims, each of claims 1, 5, 19 and 20 is being amended to incorporate the recitation of a quaternary ammonium hydroxide as an element. In that regard, Applicants will contend that at least each of the independent claims on file now recites a combination of elements that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art of record. The present invention as now claimed is distinguishable and thereby allowable over the prior art.

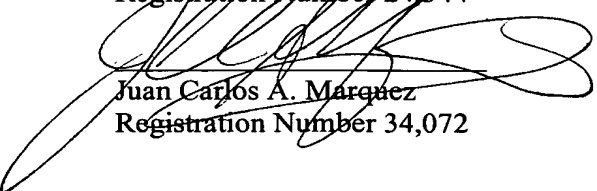
Conclusion

In view of all the above, Applicant respectfully submits that certain clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely. These differences are more than sufficient that the present invention as now claimed would not have been anticipated nor rendered obvious given the prior art. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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